

[illegible]

Wilderness Characteristics Inventory (Public)

FORM 2

Current Conditions: Presence or Absence of Wilderness Characteristics

Area Unique Identifier CDCA 1345-1 Acreage 15,334

(If the inventory area consists of subunits, list the acreage of each and evaluate separately).

In completing steps (1) – (5), use additional space as necessary.

(1) Is the area of sufficient size? (If the area meets one of the exceptions to the size criterion, check "Yes" and describe the exception in the space provided below),

Yes _____ No X

Note: If "No is checked, the area does not have wilderness characteristics; check "N/A" for the remaining questions below.

Description (describe the boundaries of the area—wilderness inventory roads, property lines, etc.):

This unit is bounded on the north by the Coachella Canal and access road; on the southeast by the Kaiser Eagle Mountain Industrial Railroad; and, on the southwest by Highway 111. The area still does not contain 5,000 acres of contiguous Public Lands and is not of sufficient size as the lands contain State, Private and Public ownership. Man-made improvements on the Private Lands have adversely affected the primeval character.

(2) Does the area appear to be natural?

Yes _____ No _____ N/A X

Note: If "No is checked, the area does not have wilderness characteristics; check "N/A" for the remaining questions below.

Description (include land ownership, location, topography, vegetation, and summary of major human uses/activities):

(3) Does the area (or the remainder of the area if a portion has been excluded due to unnaturalness and the remaining is of sufficient size) have outstanding opportunities for solitude?

Yes _____ No _____ N/A X

Description (describe the area's outstanding opportunities for solitude):

Opportunities for solitude are limited due to the confining nature of this area with the Aerial Gunnery Range, railroad tracks and the pipeline as well as the lack of topographic features to screen visitors from one another.

(4) Does the area (or the remainder of the area if a portion has been excluded due to unnaturalness and the remaining is of sufficient size) have outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation?

Yes _____ No _____ N/A X

Note: If "No" is checked for both 3 and 4, the area does not have wilderness characteristics; check "N/A" for question 5.

Description (describe the area's outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation):

(5) Does the area have supplemental values (ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic or historical value)?

Yes _____

No _____

N/A X

Description:

(Add description here)

Summary of Analysis*

Area Unique Identifier: CDCA 1345-1

Summary

The triangular shaped unit still does not contain 5,000 acres of contiguous Public Lands and is not of sufficient size as the lands contain State, Private and Public ownership. Man-made improvements on the Private Lands have adversely affected the primeval character. This unit does not meet the size criteria.

Results of analysis:

1. Does the area meet any of the size requirements? ☐ Yes ☒ No
2. Does the area appear to be natural? ☐ Yes ☒ No
3. Does the area offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation?
☐ Yes ☒ No
4. Does the area have supplemental values? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Check one:

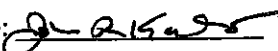
☐ The area, or a portion of the area, has wilderness characteristics and is identified as Land with Wilderness Characteristics (LWC)

☒ The area does not have wilderness characteristics.

Prepared by (team members):

John Johnson, ECFO - Environmental Protection Specialist, 6/10/2014

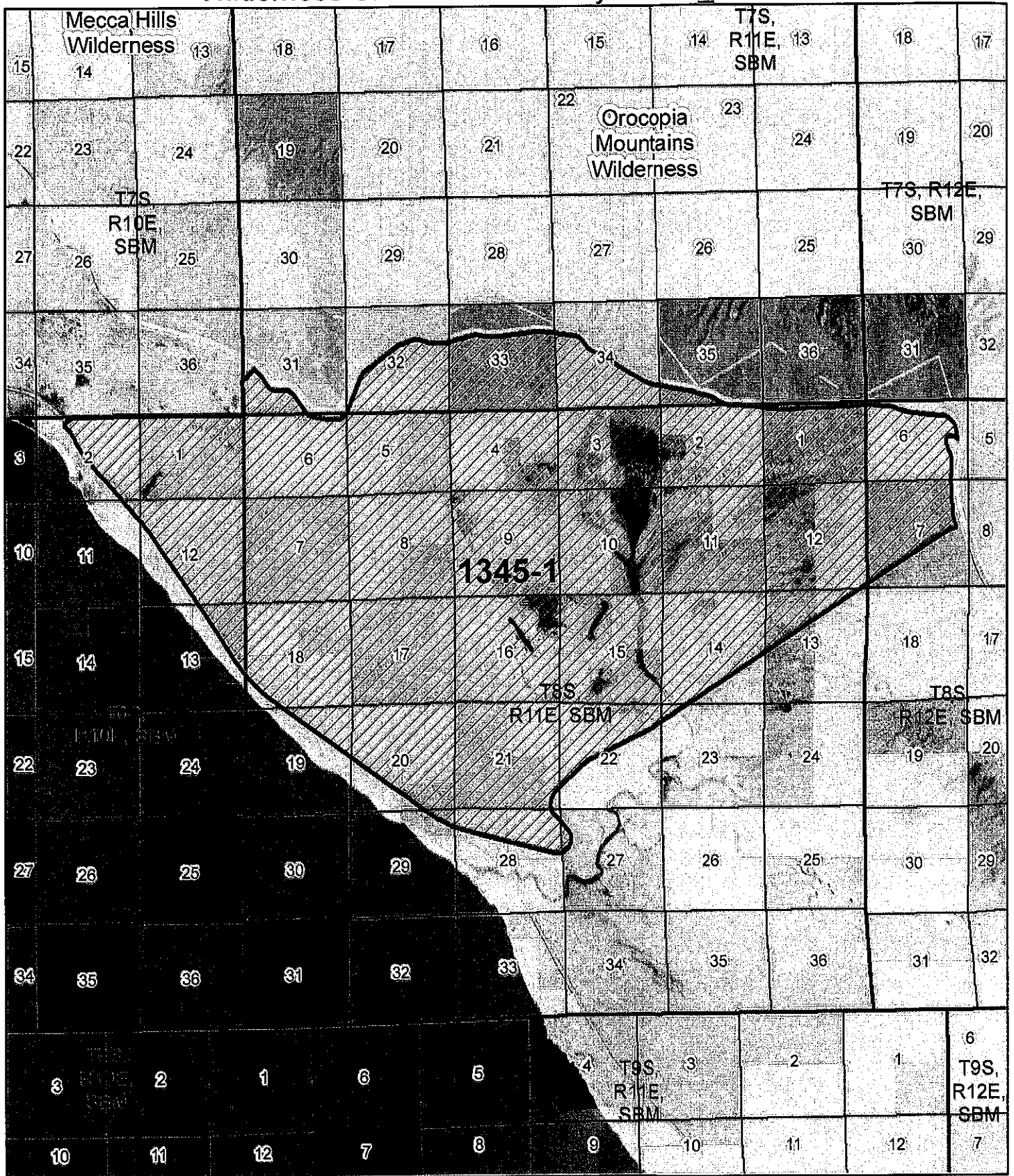
Reviewed by (District or Field Manager):

Name:  Title: Field Manager

Date: 2/9/16

*This form documents information that constitutes and inventory finding on wilderness characteristics. It does not represent a formal land use allocation or a final agency decision subject to administrative remedies under either 43 CFR or 1610.5-3

Wilderness Character Inventory CDCA_1345-1



Legend

Wilderness Inventory Units

Federal Wilderness Surface Management

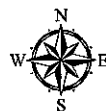
Managing Agency

- Bureau of Land Management
- US Forest Service
- National Park Service
- US Fish and Wildlife Service

Government Lands

AGENCY

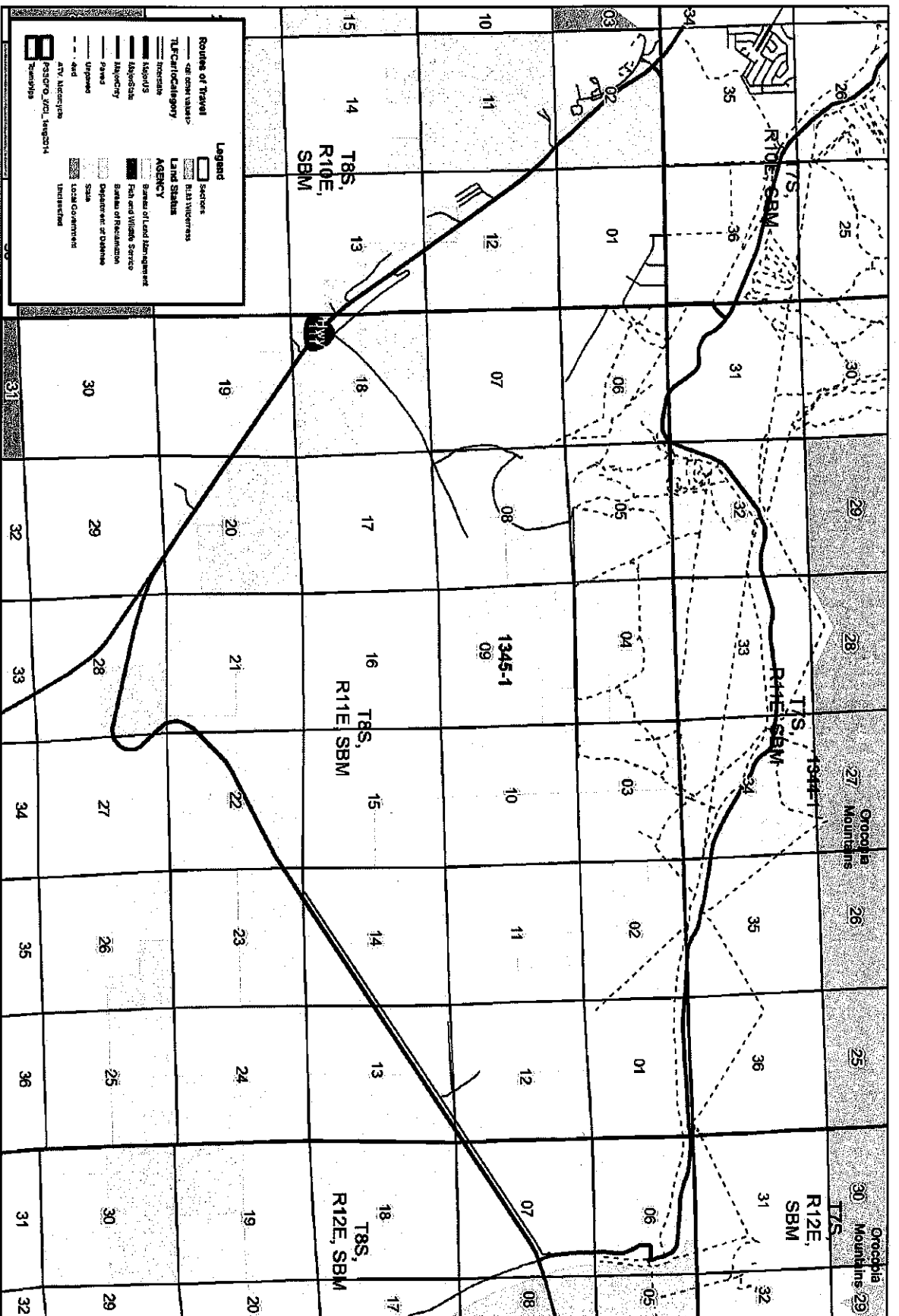
- Bureau of Land Management
- Forest Service
- National Park Service
- Fish and Wildlife Service
- Bureau of Reclamation
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Department of Defense
- Other Federal
- State
- Local Government



0 1 2 Miles

1:80,564

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 Date Prepared: 1/21/2016
 Project: CDCA_1345-1



Wilderness Character Inventory - CDCA_1345-1



east and southeast; and, to the south, the Bradshaw Stage Road and access road along the Coachella Canal and a wood pole utility line road.

II. LAND OWNERSHIP

Sections of non-public land forming a scattered checkerboard pattern account for approximately 35 percent of the area.

III. DESCRIPTION OF ENVIRONMENT

This area includes both the Orocopia Mountains and the southeastern portion of the Mecca Hills. The Mecca Hills include the often visited Sheep Hole Oasis, Hidden Springs, and the grotto. Rugged, colorful canyon walls are highly varied and in some situations exhibit fresh fault scarps. The water found at Hidden Springs is a source for wildlife such as coyote, rabbits, and Bighorn Sheep. In the desert washes grow ironwood, palo verde, smoke tree, and the palm enclaves at Sheep Hole Oasis and Hidden Springs. The Orocopia Mountains are an extremely diverse and varied mountain landform. The northern portion is characterized by open valleys, dissected ridges, and an isolated mountain. The southern portion consists of highly colorful and dramatic eroded canyons and ridges. Vegetation is sparse but varied. In the open valleys are found creosote along with ironwood in the washes. Ocotillo is found in the hilly slopes as well as a small cluster of yucca near the Red Canyon jeep trail. Views of the Salton Sea are notable throughout the southern portion of this roadless area. The northeastern portion of this area contains a checkerboard pattern of noncontiguous public lands as does a portion of the interior of the Orocopia Mountains.

IV. NATURAL CONDITION

Much of this area is within a BLM area closed to motorized vehicles and is an area which retains its primeval character and influence with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable. Some past mining activities have occurred in the Orocopias but are of insignificant importance and have done little to nothing to alter the natural condition of the land. Some primitive ways do penetrate portions of this roadless area, but the majority are in washes or in areas where the immensity and ruggedness of the terrain remain the dominant feature. In the northeast corner the natural character has been adversely affected by bulldozing scarps and ORV scars. The northern boundary also excludes the flood control dike system south of Interstate 10, and flood control dikes north of the Coachella Canal along the southern boundary. All of the checkerboard land ownership pattern, in the area, has been excluded from the inventory as it does not contain contiguous public land.

V. OUTSTANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE OR A PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED TYPE OF RECREATION

The rugged character of the terrain and the diversity of land forms insure outstanding opportunities for solitude in both areas. Rocky outcrops and numerous canyons add to the ability of the landscape to screen visitors and add to the sense of isolation. Opportunities for a primitive and unconfining type of recreation are outstanding due to diversity and the ability of the site to ensure unrestricted movement.

VI. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

Comments received pointed out popularity of the area by recreational vehicle users, the overall high natural value of much of the area and questioned the BLM about deleting the extreme eastern end of the roadless area.

AREA 345

I. PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES

This triangular-shaped area is bounded on the north by the Coachella Canal and access road; on the southeast, by the Kaiser Eagle Mountain Industrial Railroad; and, on the southwest, by Highway 111.

II. LAND OWNERSHIP

This area does not contain 5,000 acres of contiguous public lands and is not of sufficient size to make practical its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition. Furthermore, man-made improvements on the private land ownership have adversely affected the primeval character.

III. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

The few comments received agreed with the findings.

AREA 346

I. PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES

This area is bounded on the northwest by the Kaiser Eagle Mountain Industrial Railroad; on the southwest, by Highway 111; on the east, by the Frink Road; and, on the northeast, by the Coachella Canal and access road.

II. LAND OWNERSHIP

This area does not contain 5000 acres of contiguous public lands and is not of sufficient size to make practical its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition. Furthermore, the natural condition of the land has been severely altered by man's work, which includes utility pole lines and man-made improvements.

III. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

The few comments received agreed with the findings.

AREA 347

I. PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES

The area is bounded on the northwest by the Bradshaw Trail Road, and the Kaiser Eagle Mountain Industrial Railroad; on the east, by a gas pipeline road; and, on the south, by the Chocolate Mountain Aerial Gunnery Range.

II. LAND OWNERSHIP

This area does not contain 5000 acres of contiguous public lands because of the checkerboard public/non-public land ownership pattern.

III. DESCRIPTION OF ENVIRONMENT

This area is relatively flat with little topographic relief. Some ironwood and creosote grow in this area.

IV. NATURAL CONDITION

The area generally appears to be affected primarily by the force of nature, although some structures and equipment at the Summit reduce the naturalness of the area.

V. OUTSTANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE OR A PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED TYPE OF RECREATION

Opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation are limited due to the confining nature of this area and the inability of topographic features to screen visitors from one another.

VI. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

A few comments were received: most comments favor designating all or parts of this area as wilderness; others, opposed to a wilderness classification.

AREA 348

I. PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES

This roadless area is bordered on the north by Interstate 10 and the Chuckwalla Valley Road; on the west, by a gas pipeline right-of-way; on the south, by a combination of the Chocolate Mountain Aerial Gunnery Range, a mining road and the Bradshaw Stage Road; and, on the east, by the Graham Pass Road.